

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CINCUSNAVEUR
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
COMSIXTHFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 5596

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT--SUMMARY PARA LINE FOUR ADDED)

E.O 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS EG CY
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PRESS ACCUSES CYPRUS OF COLLUSION IN
SIBAI MURDER AND DUPLICITY IN LARNACA SHOOT-OUT; DIPLO-
MATIC RELATIONS SUSPENDED

REF: CAIRO 5535
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SUMMARY: EGYPT SUSPENDS RELATIONS WITH CYPRUS. GOE
CLAIMS CYPRUS HAD AGREED PERMIT EGYPTIAN ACTION AT LAR-
NACA AIRPORT. IF ACTION HAD NOT TAKEN PLACE, CYPRUS
WOULD HAVE RELEASED SIBAI'S MURDERERS. COMMANDOS
TO BE GIVEN FULL MILITARY FUNERAL FEB 22.
PRESS BLAMES REJECTIONISTS AND GOC EQUALLY FOR SIBAI

MURDER AND LARNACA FIASCO. KYPRIANOU PERSONALLY ACCUSED OF COMPLICITY IN BOTH EVENTS. EGYPTIAN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COMMENT SHOWS LITTLE REMORSE OVER ACTIONS, BUT CONSIDERABLE ANGER OVER CYPRIOT RECEPTION. END SUMMARY.

1. SUSPENSION OF RELATIONS. FOLLOWING EMERGENCY MEETING FEB 20, CABINET ANNOUNCED GOE WOULD WITHDRAW ITS DIPLOMATIC MISSION, INCLUDING TECHNICAL AND TRADE STAFFS, FROM NICOSIA AS RESULT "LENIENT ATTITUDE" ADOPTED BY GOC IN DEALING WITH TERRORISTS. ACCORDING SPOKESMAN, EGYPTIAN-CYPRIOT RELATIONS WILL BE COMPLETELY REVIEWED. GOC HAS BEEN ASKED TO WITHDRAW ITS STAFF FROM CAIRO. (NO TIME LIMIT SPECIFIED. CYPRIOT AMBASSADOR, WHO ACCOMPANIED BUTROS GHALI TO CYPRUS TO SECURE RELEASE OF EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS, HAS NOT RETURNED.)

2. EXPLANATION. MININFO AL-SAWI TOLD PRESS GOVERNMENT DISPATCHED COMMANDOS IN ORDER BRING TERRORISTS TO TRIAL IN EGYPT, AS WELL AS LIBERATE HOSTAGES. AL-SAWI CLAIMED GOE INFORMED CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT OF ITS INTENTION SEND AIRCRAFT TO HELP CYPRUS DEAL WITH TERRORISTS. MFA UNDERSECRETARY AL-BAZ LIKEWISE ASSERTED GOC AGREED PERMIT EGYPTIAN PLANE LAND AT LARNACA AND WAS INFORMED RE NATURE OF PROJECTED ACTION. AKHBAR SAID EGYPTIAN UN PERM-REP ABDEL MEGUID MET WITH UNSYG WALDHEIM TWICE IN EFFORT OBTAIN TERRORISTS' EXTRADITION. MEGUID TERMED CYPRIOT CONFIDENTIAL

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ATTITUDE "ASTONISHING" AND SAID GOC BEHAVIOR HAS CAUSED BITTERNESS. MEGUID INDICATED THAT IF EGYPTIANS HAD NOT INTERVENED CYPRUS WOULD NOT HAVE PUT TERRORISTS ON TRIAL. IN FACT, MEGUID MAINTAINED GOC WAS ABOUT TO RELEASE KILLERS, PLANNED GIVE THEM CYPRIOT PASSPORTS, AND WAS PREPARED TRANSPORT THEM ON CYPRIOT PLANE TO "SOCIALIST COUNTRY."

3. RETURN. EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT BRINGING BACK 15 BODIES, TOGETHER WITH REMAINDER OF COMMANDOS EXCEPT 2 SEVERELY WOUNDED, WAS MET AT AIRPORT EARLY THIS MORNING BY PM SALIM, CABINET, AND HIGH RANKING MILITARY OFFICIALS. DEAD POSTHUMOUSLY DECORATED WITH STAR OF SINAI BY SADAT. THEY WILL BE BURIED FOLLOWING MILITARY FUNERAL TOMORROW, FEB 22, WHICH WILL BE ATTENDED BY VIRTUALLY ALL RANKING EGYPTIAN OFFICIALDOM. (COMMENT: OCCASION LIKELY BE HIGHLY EMOTIONAL AFFAIR.) COMMANDOS SCHEDULED HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE LATER TODAY IN WHICH THEY WILL PRESENT THEIR VERSION OF LARNACA AIRPORT EVENTS, INCLUDING "AGGRESSION TO WHICH THEY WERE EXPOSED."

4. BLAME? SIBAI'S KILLING BLAMED ON "REJECTION-

ISTS"; I.E., ALL PARTICIPANTS IN TRIPOLI SUMMIT INCLUDING
PLO. AKHBAR PINNED EQUAL BLAME ON CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT.
CYPRUS, SAID AKHBAR, PLAYED KEY ROLE IN SAVING MURDERERS
OF HONORABLE MAN. GOC DID NOT HESITATE SHOOT EGYPTIANS,
IN UNEQUAL BATTLE, SINCE ITS ONLY INTENTION WAS PERMIT
KILLERS ESCAPE PUNISHMENT. CONCLUDED "THEY WILL NEVER
GET AWAY WITH IT--NEVER." AHAM, QUOTING BEIRUT'S AL-
SAFIR SAID TERRORISTS ACTED ON ORDERS "ABU NIDAL",
PALESTINIAN REJECTIONIST LEADER. PREVIOUS DAY'S GUM-
HURIYYA WENT FURTHER, CONDEMNING PLO GENERALLY FOR FAILURE
SUPPRESS TERRORISM. OGRANIZATION, SAID PAPER, SHOULD
ASSUME ITS RESPONSIBILITIES; PROSECUTING, JUDGING,AND
IMPLEMENTING SENTENCES ON THOSE INVOLVED IN MURDER.

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5. EDITORIALS. EDITORIAL WRITERS AND COLUMNISTS UNIVERSALLY TREATED CYPRIOT LEADERSHIP VICIOUSLY. AHRAM STATED "BULLETS OF HATRED AND TRAITOROUS STABBING IN BACK . . . EVENTUALLY WILL BOOMERANG ON TRAITORS AND PLOTTERS." AKHBAR DISMISSED KYPRIANOU'S EXPLANATION, SAYING EGYPT WILL NEVER FORGET WHAT HAPPENED. CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE "QUEER, PASSIVE AND IRRESPONSIBLE."
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CYPRUS SHOULD HAVE PROVIDED SECURITY FOR AAPSO CONVOCATION BUT CLEARLY FAILED TO DO SO. ASIDE FROM PERMITTING CRIME TAKE PLACE, GOC APPEARED TO BE CONNIVING WITH ASSASSINS. CYPRIOT ARMED FORCES DEFENDED CRIMINALS AND TERRORISTS TO PAVE WAY FOR THEIR ESCAPE. EGYPT MISCALCULATED IN TRUSTING CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT WHICH "SUBSISTS ON TERRORISM, KIDNAPPING AND LAWLESSNESS." EGYPT WILL NEVER MISCALCULATE AGAIN--CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT "WILL LOSE MUCH BY ITS UNHOLY ALLIANCE WITH LUCIFER."

6. GUMHURIYYA BOARD CHAIRMAN MOHSIN MUHAMMAD OPINED GOC HAS FAILED LEARN FROM PAST EXPERIENCE. EARLIER CYPRIOT TERRORISM LEAD TO DIVISION OF ISLAND INTO "TWO STATES." WORLD NOW WONDERS, CYPRUS, WHERE TO . . . ? AKHBAR BOARD CHAIRMAN MOUSSA SABRI ACCUSED KYPRIANOU PERSONALLY OF COLLUSION. SAID TERRORISTS, THROUGHOUT ENTIRE INCIDENT, DEMONSTRATED CERTAINTY THAT CYPRIOT SECURITY FORCES WOULD NOT MOLEST THEM. TERMED KYPRIANOU'S BEHAVIOR "CRIME NO LESS HORRIBLE THAN SIBAI'S MURDER."

7. COMMENT: PRESS HAS ACCUSED GOC OF COMPLICITY IN SIBAI MURDER BY FOCUSING ON LACK OF PROTECTION FOR SIBAI, EASE WITH WHICH GUNMEN OBTAINED HOSTAGES (INCLUDING SOME--SUCH AS MAVERICK LEFTIST LYSSARIDES--PROTECTED BY BODYGUARD), GOC ASSISTANCE IN TERRORISTS' DEPARTURE, AND WILLINGNESS FACILITATE THEIR SUBSEQUENT ONWARD TRAVELS. WHILE ACCUSATIONS AT LEAST PARTIALLY SELF-SERVING TO OBFUSCATE DISMAL FAILURE OF EGYPTIAN COMMANDOES, GOC ACTIONS--OR LACK THEREOF--DO RAISE DISTURBING QUESTIONS ABOUT CYPRIOT INTENTIONS. THIS TRUE ALSO OF REPORTED CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN NATIONAL GUARD AND PLO DURING LARNACA SHOOT-OUT (NICOSIA 474) AND LYSSARIDES' SHADOWY ROLE DURING NEGOTIATING PROCESS, GIVEN HIS CLOSE IDENTIFICATION WITH PALESTINIAN REJECTIONISTS AND RADICAL ARABS.
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TION WITH PALESTINIAN REJECTIONISTS AND RADICAL ARABS.

8. EGYPTIAN CONCLUSION THAT CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT PLANNED
RELEASE SIBAI'S MURDERERS IS UNDERSTANDABLE GIVEN FACT
THAT, FROM ALL ACCOUNTS THIS WAS PRECISELY WHAT GOC IN-
TENDED. CERTAINLY, GOC'S TRACK RECORD ON TERRORISM, TO
WHICH FEB 21 PRESS CAREFULLY REFERRED, GAVE EGYPTIANS
NO REASON SUSPECT CYPRIOTS, THIS TIME, WERE PREPARED
DEAL SEVERELY WITH SIBAI'S KILLERS. EGYPTIAN PUBLIC
AND PRIVATE COMMENT THUS FAR SHOWS LITTLE REMORSE OVER
DISPATCHING TROOPS, BUT CONSIDERABLE ANGER AT RECEPTION
THEY ACCORDED BY STATE GOE HAS CONSISTENTLY SUPPORTED OVER
YEARS. ELITS

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